United Nations A/AC.109/2008/SR.12

General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 October 2008

Original: English

Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Summary record of the 12th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 3 September 2008, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Natalegawa ..... (Indonesia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Opening of the resumed session

1. **The Chairman** declared open the resumed session of the Special Committee.

Adoption of the agenda

2. *The agenda was adopted.*

Increase in the membership of the Special Committee (A/AC.109/2008/20; A/AC.109/2008/L.16)

3. **The Chairman** drew attention to a letter addressed to him from the Permanent Representative of Ecuador (A/AC.109/2008/20), which conveyed a request that the Special Committee should consider granting Ecuador membership of the Committee, and also to the draft decision which he had submitted, whereby the General Assembly would appoint Ecuador as a member of the Committee (A/AC.109/2008/L.16). Ecuador had participated in the work of the Special Committee for a number of years as an observer, and the Committee always embraced those who were keen to engage with its work. Ecuador's membership request was therefore a positive step.

4. **Mr. Labbé** (Chile) said that, like all South American nations that had experienced colonialism, Chile attached great importance to the issue of independence. His delegation felt sure that Ecuador would demonstrate the political will to advance the cause of self-determination and would bring a legal perspective to the Special Committee's work. He fully supported Ecuador's request for membership of the Special Committee.

5. **Mr. Palavicini Guédez** (Venezuela) said that the achievement of self-determination by many countries over the past 60 years had transformed the membership of the United Nations and was one of the proudest chapters in the Organization's history. His delegation also supported Ecuador's request for membership.

6. **Mr. Siles Alvarado** (Bolivia) endorsed the remarks made by the previous two speakers and expressed support for Ecuador's request to become a member of the Special Committee, which had consistently shown solidarity with peoples seeking self-determination and the full exercise of democracy.

7. **Ms. Hernández Toledano** (Cuba) said that Ecuador's presence on the Special Committee would strengthen the latter's work as the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism drew to a close. Ecuador's positive attitude towards the exercise of the right to self-determination was well known, and its wish to become a member of the Special Committee reflected the fact that the cause of decolonization remained a priority of the United Nations. Her delegation looked forward to working together with Ecuador in the Special Committee in order to eradicate the scourge of colonialism once and for all, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

8 **Mr. Gonsalves** (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) associated himself with the comments made by previous speakers and said that, while requests for membership of the Special Committee should not necessarily be granted as a matter of course, his delegation fully endorsed Ecuador's request for membership. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, like other Caribbean countries which had only recently emerged from the shackles of colonialism, held dear the principles of self-determination and independence. Ecuador, with its record of promoting the right of peoples to self-determination, would be a valuable addition to the Special Committee.

9. *Draft decision A/AC.109/2008/L.16 was adopted.*

10. **Ms. Espinosa** (Ecuador) welcomed the adoption of the draft decision and said that her delegation was keen to contribute to the implementation of the Special Committee's mandate and to the promotion of the objectives of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. She reiterated her country's commitment to promoting self-determination, democracy and freedom for all peoples.

Closure of the resumed session

11. **The Chairman** declared closed the resumed session of the Special Committee.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.